



Past present and future of public space

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON ART, ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN
Bologna, Italy, 25-27 June 2014

ABSTRACT

In Europe the historic city is the result of a seamless integration between the physical dimension and the content of identity: the system of public spaces is the fulcrum of the entire urban structure, authentic stage of the meeting community. Monumental beauty is intended to be a significant value, able to fascinate and to seduce, a mean to make people feel part of the urban whole. The need to preserve historical values of designed public spaces, for a large consumption of their beauty, through a maintenance program of interventions, for many years have frozen any possibility to enhance emerging needs and desires to enjoy public life inside the city, even in its consolidated parts: following a static process of self-satisfaction and a progressive expulsion of functions and architectural languages not coherent and appropriated with the existing morphology, the old city progressively disconnected its history from the accelerated, dynamic evolution of the contemporary society, while the social significance of public space as a meeting place for people started an on-going process of deep decline. Nowadays it is evident that many activities previously taking place in the historic public space have emigrate to large and comfortable residences and workplaces, to social institutions and specialized ones, such as leisure facilities and department stores, existing outside the old city. Also, the mutual neighbourhood assistance has been replaced by forms of interactions not related on social contacts and proximity and not governed by the physical space, producing a general loss of urbanity.

Around the world a lot of people and organizations are intervening directly in their own urban environments: they bring incremental improvements to streets, blocks and neighborhood through small-in-scale actions of informal urban design and spontaneous interventions of micro-urbanism. Handmade and tactical activities are like-minded expressions of a real need to create something better, a need to exist and act. Living communities are reclaiming to be part of the urban game, thus designing a new kind of city overlapped on the existing city, an unexpected, unconventional and exciting city, cheap and freely accessible to everyone, embedded with vibrant accelerations, life and aspirations. Often results are temporary but they have a great impact on residential communities, against a small investment, because of their immediate ability to infuse places with value and meaning.

In the contemporary urbanism emerging principles are becoming new paradigms, developing innovative design methodologies. The concept of "everyday space" defines ordinary places that function as connective tissue in the dispersal urban morphology of the modern city. These spaces can be ambiguous, obvious, banal, un-designed or invisible, such as vacant lots, sidewalks, front yards, parks, parking lots, but with the potential to foster new forms of social interaction even if they work as collective places only a few hours during the day or only a few days during the week or the month. So the social life of different "publics" produces places with community significance: such open-minded spaces can acquire constantly changing meanings, social, aesthetic, political, economic, they are designed for a variety of uses, including unforeseen and unforeseeable ones. This reverses conventional concepts of "public" and "space": instead of reproducing the morphology of "public spaces", this theory collects and analyze experiences and activities of different "publics", observing the temporal rhythms and daily itineraries that define their spaces. Architects, engineers, urban designers and planners, can be part of these processes that link design and top-down planning with bottom-up activism for the common good, looking for commons-based solutions. But it is necessary to change point of view and to establish a new approach to urban design, a new strategy based on people and everyday spaces, a new vision for a more comprehensive expression of urbanity.

The "*Past present and future of public space*" international conference on Art, Architecture and Urban Design, to be held in Bologna (Italy) on 2014, June 25-27, aims to discuss results of research activities, through a multidisciplinary approach, on public space and architectural and urban design, comparing principles and projects with advisors and correspondents from different contexts. Theories and international experiences will be proposed and discussed in a special Italian session dedicated to the city of Bologna, in order to promote a re-design and re-use of different public spaces, working with artists and designers, and to promote a general plan able to enhance public life in the historic and suburban city.



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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Scholars, architects, urban designers, planners, photographers and artists can participate by sending proposals related to the following topics.

Proposals can be: papers as a result of research activities, portfolio of images, short movies, works of art, multimedia products, drawings (projects, analysis, sketches), innovative objects.

Proposals must be in English, must be original and not under consideration by any other conference.

Deadline for ABSTRACT PROPOSALS: 20 December 2013

Deadline for notification of acceptance: 7 March 2014

Deadline for submission of FULL PROPOSALS: 5 May 2014

Proposals can be send to event@cityspacearchitecture.org

Instructions for submissions are available at the following link:

<http://www.cityspacearchitecture.org/?p=past-present-future-of-public-space>

Abstract proposals and full proposals will be **reviewed** by the Scientific Committee.

Full proposals accepted for oral presentation at the conference will be **published** in a book, as conference proceedings.

MORPHOLOGY AND DESIGN			
HISTORIC PATTERNS: CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY	SUBURBAN WORLD	WALKABILITY, CYCLABILITY, GREEN CORRIDORS	QUALITY OF ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN
MULTIDISCIPLINARY FIELDS			
PUBLIC LIFE FROM A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH	PERCEPTION AND SENSES IN THE URBAN SPACE	CITY AND FOOD	URBAN AGRICULTURE
NEW APPROACHES			
PUBLICS AND THEIR SPACES	LIGHTER, CHEAPER, QUICKER INTERVENTIONS	CITY AS A COMMON GOOD	MAPPING THE COMMONS
EMERGING TRENDS			
URBAN HACKING	NEW LANGUAGES IN THE PUBLIC REALM	SMART CITIES	URBAN HAPPINESS AND WELL- BEING